

Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

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FM AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6196
INFO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE
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AMEMBASSY BUDAPEST
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY SOFIA
AMEMBASSY WARSAW
47(943)/AMEMBASSY SEOUL 037

C O N F I D E N T I A L PRAGUE 2479

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PORG, CZ, KN
SUBJECT: NORTH KOREAN FRUSTRATION OVER SOUTH KOREAN ATTENDANCE
AT INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS

REF: SEOUL 7959

1. VISITING BPAO HAMBURG INADVERTENTLY WAS SPECTATOR LAST WEEK AS NORTH KOREAN GROUP PROTESTED HOTLY (IN ENGLISH) TO CZECHOSLOVAK ORGANIZERS OF INTERNATIONAL PHILATELY FEDERATION (FIP) CONGRESS CURRENTLY UNDER WAY HERE ABOUT PRESENCE OF SOUTH KOREAN DELEGATION. NORTH KOREANS CONTENTED IT WAS INTOLERABLE THAT THEIR ALLIES WOULD PERMIT SOUTH KOREANS TO PARTICIPATE. CZECHS RESPONDED THAT NATIONALITY WAS IRRELEVANT; FIP CHARTER PROVIDES ALL COUNTRIES WHOSE NATIONAL PHILATELIC COUNCILS ARE MEMBERS OF FIP MAY SEND DELEGATION TO ITS MEETINGS. AS FIP MEMBER AND CONGRESS HOST CZECHOSLOVAKIA HAD NO OPTION BUT TO ALLOW SOUTH KOREAN
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ATTENDANCE. CZECHS STUCK FIRMLY TO THIS POSITION IN SPITE OF RANTING OF FRUSTRATED NORTHERNERS.

2. COMMENT: IF CZECHS HAD ANY DOUBTS ABOUT THEIR POSITION, ATTENDANCE AT WOMEN'S VOLLEYBALL CHAMPIONSHIPS IN USSR OF SOUTH KOREAN TEAM, WHOSE MATCH WITH SOVIET WOMEN WAS SCREENED HERE ON INTERVISION SEPTEMBER 6,

WOULD HAVE REMOVED THEM. SO FAR IT DOES NOT APPEAR THIS DISPUTE WENT BEYOND PHILATELIC CIRCLES, AS NO EVIDENCE OF COOLNESS IN CSSR-NORTH KOREAN RELATIONS HAS BEEN VISIBLE. (SUCH EVIDENCE COULD BECOME QUICKLY KNOWN, IN PART BECAUSE NORTH KOREAN AMBASSADOR HAS JUST BECOME DEAN OF LOCAL DIPLOMATIC CORPS.) NATIONAL FRONT PUT ON CEREMONY SEPTEMBER 4 TO OBSERVE 30TH ANNIVERSARY OF FOUNDING OF NORTH KOREA AND OFFICIAL ATTENDANCE AT SEPTEMBER 8 NATIONAL DAY RECEPTION WAS AT ABOUT THE SAME LEVEL AS AT BULGARIAN RECEPTION SAME NIGHT -- MORE MEMBERS OF PARTY SECRETARIAT ATTENDED BULGARIAN FETE BUT ONLY ONE CANDIDATE MEMBER OF PRESIDUM, WHILE ONE FULL PRESIDUM MEMBER AND ONE CANDIDATE MEMBER ATTENDED KOREAN.

3. WE CANNOT COORBORATE REPORT IN REFTTEL ON CZECHOSLOVAK PREJUDICE AGAINST PYONGYANG, BUT FEEL CERTAIN THERE IS NATURAL PREFERENCE IN COMMERCIAL CIRCLES HERE FOR HARD CURRENCY CUSTOMERS, IN THIS CASE SEOUL.
BYRNE

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